

GREAT BARRINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

Thursday, November 10, 2022

- I. CALL TO ORDER: Attendance Roll Call - Potential Board vote. Chairman John Grogan opened the meeting via Zoom at 2:00pm with a roll call: John Grogan, “aye,” Eileen Mooney, “aye,” Philip Orenstein, “aye.
- II. Added item – Minutes and Accounting - J. Grogan stated his ongoing concerns about the backlog of meeting minutes and the need to find another option for completing minutes. He also stated in his outreach to accounting firms either they did not respond or were not taking new clients. He stated Barry Clairmont had advised that GBHA needs a bookkeeper, not an accounting firm – and suggested some names. J. Grogan stated he is meeting with one on Monday. The board considered what services are needed from an accounting or bookkeeping firm and confirmed the discussion is part of a larger board discussion around the accounting and budget process as well as roles/responsibilities. E. Mooney asked what are DHCD requirements and if a bookkeeper would be satisfactory. It was agreed that more information is needed.
- III. POLICY DISCUSSION AND REVISION - Potential Board vote.
- A. The board continued its review/discussion of GBHA policies -
1. Grievance Policy – E. Mooney stated the existing policy is not easy to read/understand and is badly organized. She suggested a rewrite with the grievance and hearing process laid out in steps. J. Grogan stated adding a paragraph outlining the grievance process will provide clarity and the policy itself is good as is. P. Orenstein pointed out the policy comes from DHCD, and though not user friendly, a rewrite might mean GBHA would no longer be following the DHCD model. He added a paragraph/one-pager as a preface to the document would be helpful. The board discussed the hearing office piece of the grievance process about which there is no guidance from DHCD. E. Mooney stated she would edit the policy for improved clarity/ phrasing – and would not change legal wording/meaning. The board discussed the role of the Executive Director and the LTO in the grievance process.
 2. Snow Removal Policy – P. Orenstein stated Dewey Court should be added to the policy and he had removed specific timing/hours. The board discussed concerns about the expectation for seniors to clear/move their cars and what accommodations the office can offer - it was agreed that T. Danzy and R. Phair need to weigh in on what is reasonable, appropriate and necessary. Jackie Sinico stated cars cannot be moved to the upper parking lot as there are not enough spots and she noted tenants help each other clear their cars. P. Orenstein stated he would send the existing and revised Snow Policy to J. Grogan. E. Mooney suggested separating the policy and procedural aspects of the Snow Policy.
- B. Policy Review Process – It was agreed board members should circulate to the group drafts of the policies each was assigned asking for input/comments/edits - that input should be incorporated and discussed/recirculated for consensus – and then sent to T. Danzy and R. Phair for feedback. It was also agreed that the LTO should have the opportunity to provide input and be given sufficient time/information to do so. The board discussed the policy voting/approval process and decided it can be concluded in one round of voting and to review/discuss/vote on a few policies at a time in public meetings as an agenda item to foster broad participation/transparency. The board decided to consider the following policies in the first round: Snow Removal Policy, Grievance Policy and others including new Communications Policy; Harassment Policy, Credit Card Policy, Damage Charge Policy, Vehicle and Parking Policy. P. Orenstein suggested having a scorecard/tracking tool to monitor the policy review process and stated he has a list that he will forward to the board. It was agreed that at this point, the focus will be primarily on revising existing policies rather than adding new policies.

IV. CITIZEN SPEAK

- A. Marlene Koloski stated the LTO should be informed on the policies and suggested a live meeting be held. The board reconfirmed it would include LTO input noting that policy discussions are being held in a public forum – and emphasized that at this time, the focus is on clarifying/organizing the policies. M. Koloski also inquired when the office is open when a holiday falls on a weekend – J. Grogan replied it is state policy to give off the day before or after and it is up to the Executive Director to decide. E. Mooney suggested it should be included in the Personnel Policy.
- B. J. Sinico suggested calling an LTO meeting and for M. Koloski to discuss the policies with tenants.

V. BOARD COMMENTS – There were no board member comments.

VI. ADJOURNMENT – J. Grogan made a motion to adjourn; P. Orenstein seconded. Roll call vote: J. Grogan, “aye,” E. Mooney, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor: 3-0. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 3:14pm.

Documents reviewed:

- GBHA Policies

Respectfully submitted,

Stacy Ostrow